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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; March 9, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

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Survey Finds Most Universities Lack System  
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DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy, came to Seoul on March 7. He will hold a series of meetings with ROKG officials today. Ambassador Bosworth said upon arrival that he does not have any plans to visit North Korea on this trip but made it clear that the U.S. is reaching out and wants dialogue with the North. (Dong-a, Hankyoreh, all TVs, VoiceofPeople)

Tension on the Korean Peninsula is expected to escalate further this week, as the ROK and the U.S. begin a 12-day large-scale, joint military exercise today, despite a series of North Korean threats. (All)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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North Korea yesterday held elections for the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), marking what some have described as the third Kim

Jong-il regime. (All)

Given that North Korea has made provocations around SPA elections in the past, including the launch of a Taepodong-1 missile during the 1998 elections and the outbreak of the second North Korean nuclear crisis during the 2003 elections over the North's suspected highly enriched uranium program, attention is being drawn to what the North is up to this time around. (Chosun)

#### MEDIA ANALYSIS

##### -North Korea

Most of the ROK media today gave play to March 7 press remarks in Seoul by Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy. Ambassador Bosworth was quoted as saying upon arrival in Seoul that he doesn't have any plans to visit North Korea on this trip but that the U.S. is reaching out and wants dialogue with the North. The ROK media reported that Ambassador Bosworth will hold a series of meetings with ROKG officials today. Chosun Ilbo's editorial noted Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi's March 7 press remarks saying, "We have noted that the North Korean side has announced it will launch a trial communications satellite. We hope that all parties will do more things that are helpful," and commented: "If North Korea ignores such a warning from China, it would be difficult for China to dismiss it as if nothing has

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happened. The U.S. is the country with which the North is insisting on normalizing ties, and China is the sole support in the world of the North Korean regime. Will the North continue to ignore these unanimous calls by these countries?"

North Korea's March 9 elections for the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) received wide play. Most of the ROK media described the elections as marking "the third Kim Jong-il regime." Chosun Ilbo, in particular, noted that North Korea has made provocations around SPA elections, including the launch of a Taepodong-1 missile during the 1998 SPA elections and the outbreak of the second North Korean nuclear crisis during the 2003 elections over a suspected highly enriched uranium program, and headlined its story: "What is North Korea Up To This Time Around?" JoongAng Ilbo's headline read: "Attention is Drawn to Whether Kim Jong-il's Third Son, Jong-un, will be Among the Newly Elected Lawmakers, a Strong Sign that He is Being Groomed to Inherit Power from His Father"

Regarding North Korea's threat against ROK civilian planes flying through the North's airspace, JoongAng Ilbo editorialized on Saturday (March 7): "It is obvious why North Korea is ratcheting up threats this year. North Korea is attempting to increase insecurity on the Korean Peninsula, to cause conflict among ROK people and to put pressure on the U.S. to have direct talks that would exclude the ROK. However, the North's leaders must be aware that the North's threats and brinkmanship will turn public opinion against the North, resulting in doing the country harm."

Dong-a Ilbo's editorial echoed JoongAng's view, arguing: "To threaten the safety of civilian flights is a violation of international law which will result in international sanctions. This visit to Seoul by the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy, Stephen Bosworth, should be an opportunity for the two allies to share their understanding about the North's nuclear programs and increase their collaboration against the North's aggression."

##### -Russia-US: Clinton-Lavrov meeting

Most of the ROK media gave straight play to a March 6 meeting in Geneva between Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, quoting Secretary Clinton as saying after the meeting: "The U.S. wants to reset relations with Russia and to make a fresh start."

1N. Korea Urges Unity Then Threatens Civilian Flights  
(Dong-a Ilbo, March 7, 2009, Page 27)

Labeling the annual Key Resolve/Foal Eagle exercise of the South Korea-U.S. Combined Forces Command as a drill for an attack, North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland said, "We cannot ensure the safety of South Korean civilian flights crossing our airspace in the East Sea during a joint war drill." Pyongyang in essence hinted at a possible attack on civilian flights flying over the East Sea, on top of its earlier threat to cross the Northern Limit Line in the West Sea.

The exercise aims to ensure South Korea's security in the event of a North Korean attack. Pyongyang has blasted the drill all of sudden to contain Seoul and communicate only with Washington by increasing tension through far-reaching pressure on the South. The move effectively demonstrates yet again the dual face of the Kim Jong Il government, which has repeatedly urged cooperation between the Korean people.

North Korea, which joined the International Civil Aviation Organization in 1977, opened its airspace to international carriers, including those of South Korea, in 1998. The North charges 685 euros (870 U.S. dollars) per B747 flight when foreign airliners fly

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over its airspace.

Pyongyang is getting increasingly nervous, as Washington shows no change in its stance against the North's nuclear program even after the inauguration of the Obama Administration. The North is striving to open a channel for bilateral talks with the U.S. by attracting Washington's attention. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who visited South Korea last month, emphasized the solidity of the South Korea-U.S. alliance. She made it clear that the North's strategy to contain the South and talk only with the U.S. will prove futile.

It is time for the North to give up its brinkmanship approach. To threaten the safety of civilian flights is a violation of international law that will result in international sanctions. Seoul and Washington must increase their policy coordination in times like this. Today's visit by the new U.S. envoy for North Korea, Stephen Bosworth, is also an opportunity for the two allies to share their understanding about the North's nuclear program and increase their collaboration against the North's aggression. The only way for Pyongyang to maintain its regime and survive is to humbly accept repeated calls for dialogue from Unification Minister Hyun In-taek and President Lee Myung-bak.

\* This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.

1N. Korea Can't Afford to Ignore U.S. and China  
(Chosun Ilbo, March 9, 2009, Page 31)

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said in a press conference on Saturday, "We have noted that the North Korean side has announced it will launch a trial communications satellite. We express our concern about the developments... We hope that all parties will do more things that are helpful." Yang added that Beijing is aware of various countries' responses to North Korea's announcement and that it is in their best interest to maintain stability on the Korean Peninsula.

On arrival in South Korea on Saturday, Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth said, "We've indicated our position to them on the question of the missile launch, or satellite launch, or whatever they call it. We think it's very ill-advised."

Ahead of visits to China, Japan and South Korea starting last Tuesday, Ambassador Bosworth explained his plans to U.S. President Barack Obama. Ambassador Bosworth's trilateral negotiations will

serve as the foundations which the Obama Administration will use to decide its North Korea policies. And while being cautious about commenting on a possible visit to North Korea and the resumption of the six-country nuclear talks, Ambassador Bosworth drew a clear line when it came to the missile launch. China had not made a public statement since Feb. 24, when North Korea gave notice of the launch, insisting that it was part of its satellite program. Yet following a meeting with Ambassador Bosworth last Wednesday, Beijing asked North Korea to halt it, apparently as a result of fine-tuning with Washington.

They probably discussed sanctions against North Korea should it ignore warnings by neighbors countries and push ahead with its long-range missile launch. The U.S. has pointed out clearly that this would be a violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1718, which bans all North Korean missile-related programs. The UN resolution blocks the export of military goods and luxury items to North Korea. If it ignores Beijing's warning not to damage stability on the Korean Peninsula, then it will be difficult for China to brush off the incident as if nothing had happened.

North Korea is stubbornly demanding the establishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S., while China is virtually the only country on earth that supports the North. Will North Korea ignore the voices of these two countries?

\* This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.

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The ROK Should Prepare for Global Industrial Upheaval  
(JoonAng Ilbo, editorial, March 9, 2009, Page 26)

U.S. President Obama will sign an executive order allowing U.S. funding for embryonic stem cell research. With the financial support from the U.S. government, stem cell research will see a breakthrough. Last month, President Obama signed an executive order to increase the production of (environment-friendly) "green" cars. The aim of the executive order is to toughen regulations on emissions and promote the production of electric cars in order to seize control over the auto industry again.

Obama's recent moves seem to go beyond (merely creating) policy to respond to the current economic crisis. He is sketching out a new plan for the 21st century economy. While the U.S. government provides a bailout package to ailing corporations, it is outlining a blueprint to secure a new growth engine through its powerful fundamental and state-of-the art technology. The Obama Administration is supporting the green industry (including alternative energy) and the bio (tech) industry (including stem cell research.) It is yet uncertain whether these efforts by the U.S. will pay off. However, these moves by the U.S. will immensely impact the global industry.

The ROKG should prepare for this global industrial upheaval. We should not focus only on the ongoing economic crisis but turn our attention elsewhere. Last month, the National Bioethics Advisory Committee decided to review the proposal for embryonic stem cell research. The Committee should give a green light to the research. As long as it conforms to the 'Bioethics & Biosafety Law', the earlier the research is resumed, the better it is. The 'Low Carbon, Green Growth' (initiative) espoused by President Lee Myung-bak should gain more momentum. The ROKG should give full-fledged support to "future industry" in such as areas as alternative energy, carbon nanotubes or stem cell research. With the emergence of the Obama Administration, the global war for the new industry has been set off. Now is the time to invest in the next-generation growth engine for our survival.

#### FEATURES

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Bosworth to Meet ROK Diplomatic and Security Officials  
(Dong-a Ilbo, March 9, 2009, Page 3)

By Reporter Kim Young-sik

"I want to meet with North Korean officials, even though not right now," said Special Representative for North Korea Policy Bosworth. He also noted, "The U.S. is reaching out and wants dialogue with the North."

Ambassador Bosworth, who arrived in Seoul on March 7, sent a message to North Korea that the U.S. wants dialogue with the North. However, he was very cautious about his plan to visit North Korea.

Asked what are the preconditions for visiting North Korea, he answered, "I do not want to talk about it." He added, "I do not have any plans to travel to North Korea on this trip." Also, regarding the North's threats against ROK civilian airlines, he said, "I hope North Korea will withdraw its threats."

The North's preparations for a missile launch and a series of incessant military threats seem to have made Ambassador Bosworth take a cautious approach. According to the Kyodo news agency, when he met Japanese lawmakers from the ruling and opposition parties on March 6, he expressed his hope to travel to North Korea as soon as possible.

As North Korea Policy Coordinator William Perry during the Clinton Administration did to establish the 'Perry Process', Ambassador Bosworth needs to visit North Korea or meet with North Korean officials in the near future in order to grasp the North's real

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intentions.

Ambassador Bosworth seems to take the view that if he meets with North Korean officials now, the losses will outweigh the benefits. If North Korea goes ahead with a missile launch even after his meeting with North Korean officials, it would only undermine his standing as Special Representative for North Korea Policy.

He is scheduled to meet Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, Unification Minister Hyun In-taek and senior Presidential Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Security Kim Sung-hwan. He will (also) pay a courtesy visit to President Lee Myung-bak

Given the situation, the ROKG is giving him an indirect message that his future visit to North Korea should differ from the visit by former Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill, who failed to meet any North Korean official ranking higher than Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-gwan.

STEPHENS